

# Advancing EPA's Work Through The Office for

# CIVIL RIGHTS AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Accomplishments Report 1998-2001



## Message from the Director, Joyce C. Kelly

The Office for Civil Rights and Environmental Justice, the youngest Office in Region 10, has a story to tell. It's a story unique to an Office that acts as a catalyst for change within the context of EPA's environmental mission. Being a catalyst for change means persuading, pulling, and guiding others to improve beyond the status quo. We often work in arenas that may be politically charged, personally challenging, and require new behaviors and different expectations of ourselves and those with whom we work. It includes working collaboratively with a varied constituency including EPA's HQ office, Region 10, other Regional offices, States, Tribal governments, non-governmental organizations and the public. It takes perseverance and includes producing tangible results, educational programs, and a range of services to prevent and resolve issues related to equity. This report tells part of the story by highlighting a few of our accomplishments.

The Office for Civil Rights and Environmental Justice seeks to ensure that all people are protected from significant risks to human health and the environment; that federal laws protecting human health and the environment are enforced fairly and

effectively; and that EPA employees work in an environment free from discrimination and harassment. The work includes building upon and learning from efforts that led to the formation of the Office and moving forward with new, innovative, progressive approaches which will meet today's demands as well as anticipated future needs. To do this, the Office positions itself so that Region 10 incorporates civil rights and environmental justice principles into environmental protection objectives.

***"Don't wait for extraordinary opportunities. Seize common occasions and make them great."***  
*-Unknown*

The highlighted accomplishments in this report represent efforts led by a small staff of committed and creative individuals who strive to help EPA fully meet its mission, purpose and strategic goals. However, the success of the Office is largely a result of the collaborative support of our Tribal, federal, state, non-governmental and community partners and our Region 10 co-workers in the Seattle, operations and place-based offices. Therefore, this report is also a "Thank you" to all of you who have worked with us

since the creation of our office, including but not limited to contributors to the Employee Resource Programs, participants in the Environmental Justice Core Group, members of the Ombudsman Initiative Workgroup, attendees at Diversity learning events, participants in EEO and Environmental Justice trainings, reviewers of environmental impact statements, and EEO counselors. Your continued involvement is essential to help Region 10 advance the principles of civil rights and environmental justice.

## *What You'll Find Inside...*

Mission, Vision, Goals .....	Page 2
OCREJ Staff/Network .....	Page 2
Preface .....	Page 3
Diversity .....	Page 4
Environmental Justice .....	Page 5
EJ Grants .....	Page 6
Equal Employment Opportunity .....	Page 7
Small & Disadvantaged Business .....	Page 8
Looking Forward .....	Page 8

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*A special "Thank You" to Judy Fey for assembling, editing and designing this Report.*

## Mission

The Office for Civil Rights and Environmental Justice is committed to the work of protecting and restoring the environment. We believe that thoughtful incorporation of civil rights and environmental justice principals and objectives with the work of each Region 10 office will help achieve environmental protection objectives. Therefore in all aspects of our work with individuals, employees, and communities our mission is to strengthen and increase Region 10's collective will and sustained commitment to:

- uphold the laws, policies, and orders of our civil rights, civil service, and environmental justice programs
- value and utilize diversity both within the regional office and as we work with our "external" customers
- demonstrate the principles of fairness and equity

## Vision

Region 10 employees and the broad community that we serve are being treated fairly and equitably in accordance with expectations as stated in the law and in our civil rights, civil service, and environmental justice policies.

OCREJ is a key, visible contributor to Region 10's work of protecting and restoring the environment because it plays a major role in ensuring that:

- Region 10 meet its commitment to individual rights, community rights and employee rights.
- People and groups bridge their differences and move toward resolution of issues.
- Region 10's employees and partners understand the value of diversity and how to use it to help accomplish environmental work.

People confidently use civil rights and environmental justice processes for appeal and resolution of equity and fairness issues because:

- they understand the processes,
- they trust the people administering the process.

There has been an intentional increase of diversity in all levels of Region 10's work force due to increased appreciation for the benefits of diversity by most employees.

All performance dialogues in Region 10 include progress indicator discussions about civil rights and environmental justice work addressing one or more of the following:

- how civil rights and environmental justice work contributes to their primary office activities,
- changes in their office's staff and management profile,
- the use of prescribed civil rights processes for advertising, recruiting, selecting and promoting employees.

OCREJ is working collaboratively with each Region 10 Office to align Office goals and OCREJ goals.

OCREJ is innovative and is able and willing to refocus itself to best support Region 10's offices to accomplish civil rights and environmental justice work.

## Strategic Goals

- Develop, implement and commit to a comprehensive strategy to integrate civil rights and environmental justice principles, goals and processes into the Region's daily work.
- Enhance Region 10's work by intentionally increasing:
  - *diversity in the Region 10 organization,*
  - *the perceived value of diversity*
  - *the utilization of diversity.*
- Increase the utilization of civil rights and environmental justice learning activities and processes so that problems are prevented and issues are resolved.
- Increase environmental justice communities' access to EPA so that there is greater public involvement and informed participation in environmental protection decision-making.
- Increase, in other agencies and tribal governments, the awareness and implementation of civil rights and environmental justice laws, principles, and goals.
- Develop and maintain a measurement system to help Region 10 and its offices track their civil rights and environmental justice work progress.

# Preface

## The Purpose of this Report

*This report, the first from our office, will describe the progress made towards accomplishing the mission and goals of the OCREJ in Region 10. It documents the Office's success by highlighting the four major responsibility areas and grants activities. In many ways, the role of the OCREJ is to act as a catalyst to promote integration of civil rights laws, policies and functions in all environmental programs. In the future, it is our intention to create an abbreviated version of this report on an annual basis and make it available to the Region 10 employees via the OCREJ web site on the intranet.*

## How did we get here?

In 1998, the Region 10 Office for Civil Rights and Environmental Justice (OCREJ) began. The decision to do this was based on the report and recommendation of a Workgroup commissioned by the Regional Administrator the previous year. The belief was that the civil rights functions in the region needed more attention, focus and resources in order to:

1. accomplish the significant amount of work required to comply with the President's initiatives, public laws, and executive orders, and
2. to meet increasing civil rights and environmental justice demands both internal and external to the regional office.

The workgroup's task was to look at the most effective way for Region 10 to administer its various civil rights functions, including, but not limited to, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), Environmental Justice, legal issues and advice, the Minority/Women Business Enterprise Program (M/WBE) and Diversity. The Workgroup's recommendation was to consolidate the existing civil rights functions, which were being carried out in several programs, into one Office for Civil Rights and Environmental Justice. This office reports directly to the Regional Administrator, and the director of the office is a member of the Region's Executive Team.

## Results?

The Civil Rights and Environmental Justice programs and functions are not new, but have been significantly enhanced by becoming consolidated in one office:

- They are more visible and more easily integrated into the day to day work of the region because the Office Director participates in the ET and management team meetings
- They get focused effort which creates more opportunity for strategic planning and identification of common opportunities
- There's more ability to focus resources on getting the right work done as efficiently as possible

## What are we about?

*The ultimate goal of the Office for Civil Rights and Environmental Justice is to be an effective organization for the achievement of protection and balance between natural resources and the people who use those resources.*

The OCREJ is committed to helping each and every employee and client in any way it can to achieve the stated goal.

## What do we do?

The Office is responsible for programs related to the civil rights of job applicants and employees, fairness in grants and contracts, and efforts to ensure that low income and people of color communities receive equitable protection under environmental laws. Office responsibility areas include:

**Diversity**, including 1. Diversity Education which provides educational programs to promote an understanding of and appreciation for the value of diversity in the workplace, and 2. The Diversity Action Plan (DAP) which addresses recruitment, hiring, promotions, awards, assignments, training and organizational culture.

**Environmental Justice (EJ)**, including work to make EJ an integral part of the day-to-day activities of EPA employees, and the work of other federal, state and local governments. The Office is a focal point to ensure that EJ target communities receive fair protection under environmental laws and have increased access to EPA.

**Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)**, including actions to prevent discrimination from occurring, timely resolution of complaints of discrimination, affirmative employment and the Employee Resource Programs.

**Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (SDBU)**, which ensures that recipients of EPA financial assistance award a fair share of contracts and procurements to small, disadvantaged and women-owned businesses.

**Special Projects** for which the OCREJ has sponsorship. A recent special project is the Ombudsman Initiative. Region 10 is unique in that it is the first EPA region to develop and implement a workplace ombudsman to look into workplace issues outside of the EEO arena. The decision was based on a thorough and exhaustive feasibility study conducted by an OCREJ-sponsored workgroup. Region 10 currently offers ombudsman services to staff and management which provides a neutral, confidential, independent avenue for solving workplace issues.





# Diversity

*The Diversity Program seeks to develop a workforce that recognizes, appreciates and utilizes diversity in order to better carry out the environmental mission of EPA.*

## What is Diversity?

### Definition of diversity in R10:

Traditionally diversity has been thought of only as ethnic, gender or racial differences. R10 seeks to recognize and foster an understanding of and appreciation for all differences in the workplace. Diversity is defined as the differences we bring to the workplace that either contribute to or detract from our ability to work together.

## Why is this important?

The vision for our Diversity efforts is to promote and foster a climate in EPA in which diversity is understood and valued. Our ability to value and demonstrate respect for the diversity among our co-workers directly affects our ability to understand and respond to the needs of diverse communities. Valuing diversity is particularly meaningful when working with groups and communities outside of EPA. Capitalizing on the benefits of diversity will enhance R10's ability to accomplish its mission of "protecting and restoring the environment of the Pacific northwest and Alaska for present and future generations."

*"We believe that diversity must be of concern and importance to all of us because it adds to the strength of our organization. We benefit from diversity because it fosters different perspectives and rationales; it offers alternative explanations; and it allows for various communication styles."*

*-R10 Streamlining Plan 1994*

There are two components to our Diversity Program:

1. Diversity Education which provides educational programs to promote an understanding of and appreciation for the value of diversity in the workplace, and
2. The Diversity Action Plan (DAP) which addresses recruitment, hiring, promotions, awards, assignments, training and organizational culture.

## Kickoff for Diversity Education

Because each individual on our Executive Team (ET) provides a visible and functional behavior model for Region 10 staff, and because they would be setting the tone of diversity discussions with staff, we began by introducing diversity education activities to the upper level managers. Many of these activities were then presented to staff. We first engaged managers and supervisors in discussions about diversity by presenting Dialogues on Diversity. These are ongoing discussions that are portable and can be presented in a small group any time there is interest. Topics for discussion are drawn from a "diversity dialogue box" and participants are encouraged to discuss topics openly and honestly.

## How are we doing?

Over the past 2 years, we have offered approximately 15 diversity events to staff, some multiple times. These include presentations, trainings, workshops, and programs, some of which were in conjunction with a special event such as Women's History Month, Native American Awareness Month, Gay Pride Month, Hiring Persons With Disabilities, and others.

A few of the most successful events were:

- Presentations by the late Santiago Rodriquez, diversity director for Microsoft, who spoke on the corporate value of a diverse work force
- A workshop called "A Winning Balance" designed to enhance understanding of diversity and promote a positive work environment
- Presentations called "Building Allies in the Workplace" which was offered during National Gay Pride Month and promoted understanding of sexual orientation issues in the workplace.

### Feedback from participants:

*"I appreciated the opportunity to discuss difficult issues with my co-workers."*

*"Having the discussion on being different was a real eye-opener for me."*

*"We need to have dialogues on a regular basis."*

## Diversity Action Plan 2001

In 1997, EPA's Administrator asked all organizations within EPA to develop a Diversity Action Plan (DAP). In FY2000, meetings were held with all regional management teams to have open and honest discussions related to the elements listed in the DAP, i.e., recruitment, hiring, training, awards, assignments, promotions, and organizational culture. Supervisors and managers were given an update on the status of the Plan and were provided an opportunity to give input to the new update. As a result of the meetings, supervisors and managers have a greater sense of ownership for the Plan and for their role in making Region 10 a better and more effective place to work.

## Diversity Assessment

The ultimate goal for Region 10 is to develop a workforce that not only respects and appreciates diversity but knows that diversity, intentionally utilized, will produce positive benefits for individuals, groups, organizations and communities. The upcoming Diversity Assessment is a critical step toward this goal. The Assessment will help us:

- Identify staff perspectives regarding diversity in Region 10;
- Identify specific issues and areas needing follow-up action;
- Identify diversity-related issues in Region 10 that range from narrow dimensions, such as race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. to broader issues, such as the perception of employees' talents being fully utilized; and
- Determine diversity education activities needed to enhance employees' knowledge, skills and abilities related to understanding and appreciating diversity.

The Diversity Assessment Project should be completed by January, 2002.

# Environmental Justice

*The EJ Program strives to provide fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, culture, income or education level with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies.*

## Making it Work

The role of Environmental Justice (EJ) staff in R10 is to: **1.** Serve as a focal point for ensuring that low income and people of color communities receive fair protection under environmental laws, **2.** Make EJ an integral part of the day-to-day program activities; and **3.** Support the implementation of the regulations to advance EJ principles.

*To be an effective program, EJ must include close partnerships through collaboration, communication and coordination efforts both internal and external to EPA.*

The R10 EJ program focuses on outreach, training, and analysis and research. For example, we:

### **Foster greater understanding of environmental and health-related issues at the community level.**

OCREJ has conducted, co-sponsored, and participated in meetings with Community groups, Action groups, and other entities such as universities and fund-raising organizations regarding issues affecting ethnic and EJ communities.

### **Increase individuals' and organizations' ability to recognize, understand and resolve EJ issues.**

- OCREJ provided information to EPA staff by conducting open houses and by developing training packages for EJ presentations.
- OCREJ provided training to such varied audiences as:
  - The Mexican American Engineering and Science Student Leadership Conference
  - The Lewis and Clark College for the EJ Law and Policy Seminar
  - Oregon State's Comprehensive Lead Planning Coalition.
  - The Northwest Tree Planters' and Farmworkers' Union (PCUN)

### **Promote public access to EPA and EJ information.**

- OCREJ has acted and will continue to act as a clearinghouse for EJ information in the Pacific Northwest
- OCREJ provided information to the public by participating in an Earth Day conference at the University of Washington.

### **Encourage partnerships through networking and collaboration.**

OCREJ hosted a networking meeting for EJ professionals which was well-attended and enthusiastically supported. This kind of activity provided a much-needed forum for EJ professionals to meet and talk about EJ issues and opportunities for mutual collaboration. It was so successful and demonstrated such a desire for further collaboration, the WA Dept. of Ecology has agreed to host the next networking meeting.

### **Contribute to empowerment of other groups.**

- OCREJ provided training at the annual Tribal Summit for NW Tribes and to the Washington State Interagency Workgroup on EJ. The training directly contributed to efforts by the Washington State Board of Health to adopt EJ as a priority issue for research and investigation.
- OCREJ is participating in a national workgroup, the EJ Training Collaborative, which is developing high quality EJ curricula. This curricula will assure that EJ training is provided in a consistent manner by federal, state and local agencies, tribes, community groups, industry and academia. The curriculum provides folks with a background on the history of EJ movement and applicable laws and regulations with an emphasis on empowering folks to integrate EJ principles into every day activities.

### **Partner with and provide support to other program offices within EPA.**

OCREJ receives routine requests from other R10 EPA offices for:

- Maps showing low income and people of color communities
- Demographic analyses
- Environmental Impact Statements
- Permit reviews

to determine if EJ communities will be subject to disproportionate impacts. Such requests assure that EJ is properly addressed in the decisions made by R10 programs.

*OCREJ worked in collaboration with R10's Office of Air Quality, Office of Environmental Assessment, and Oregon Operations Office to identify potential EJ communities in Portland, Oregon that might have been impacted by a facility regulated under Title V of the Clean Air Act.*

## The Science of EJ

Gathering data and conducting evaluations also play a significant role in the understanding of EJ, impacts on health and the environment, and in the ability to identify and track affected communities. OCREJ furthers broader and more in-depth understanding of EJ by:

### **Creating Assessment Methodologies.**

Income and race block group data has been incorporated into the Rapid Access Information Network System (RAINS) for desktop PC use, allowing every R10 employee the ability to determine whether their work will impact low income and people of color communities. The race and income data is overlaid with environmental data to provide information to determine whether a community will be disproportionately impacted by an Agency action.

### **Identifying a potential disparity in enforcement actions.**

OCREJ worked with the Office of Enforcement and Compliance to determine whether there was a disparity in the enforcement actions based on where they were imposed, how much penalty was levied and whether a penalty was imposed or not.

# EJ Grants - Making a Difference

*The Environmental Justice Grants program is designed to address “real life” EJ issues at the grass roots level. It is about local people facing local problems by working collaboratively with the local government agencies, impacted community groups and the responsible state/federal agencies. The emphasis of the projects is on community and environmental health, and many of the grants provide tools that communities use to address local public health and environmental problems.*

*The groups represented in this report encompass some of the diversity of problems found in the neighborhoods and communities throughout the Pacific Northwest and Alaska.*

## Native People of Alaska face threats to subsistence living

In FY2000 EPA provided funding for a two-year project to research, investigate and document the disproportionate environmental burden on the Native people in the remote Arctic Region of Alaska. Results of the research were compiled in a document entitled, “Environmental Justice Guidelines for the Tribes.” The Guide outlines the common issues and problems faced by the villages and proposes ways in which to address those problems. The Guide was used as the basis for discussion at a workshop in which all the member villages of the Maniilaq Association participated. The workshop was significant in that this was the first time all the villages had an opportunity to come together to identify and discuss common problems. They began a dialogue on how to address their problems and agreed to form a coalition to continue to jointly address problems that threaten their environment and subsistence living.

## Migrant Workers’ health risks in Idaho

Valley Family Healthcare is a community-based, non-profit corporation which has provided primary health care services to Latino migrant and seasonal

farm worker communities since 1982. The objective of VFHC’s EPA environmental justice small grant was to ensure that all persons living in the VFHC service area are aware of chemical risks from pesticides and other hazardous chemicals, and become informed about personal safety measures which allow them to protect themselves, their families and their friends. VFHC addressed their objective by providing community-based education to migrant and seasonal farm workers and their families. The teaching sessions incorporated a variety of different media and education techniques including skits, videos, games, discussions, etc. These varied teaching methods not only made the subject matter more engaging to the target group, but also made the information more relevant and accessible.

## A Community in NE Portland Takes Action - Albina

Portland’s North/Northeast community, one of the State’s most racially diverse neighborhoods, faces significant and disproportionate impacts from superfund sites and brownfield hazards. The Environmental Justice Action Group (EJAG) project has resulted in sustained community leadership that has created an effective network with local colleges, local government, local media and a local

environmental group. Under EJAG’s leadership, data were compiled about environmental hazards in the Albina community and a process to inform the community about the results and their opportunity for community involvement was implemented. The project collaboration has produced the report *The Lay of the Land* (1998), *Healthy Albina* (1999, 2001) and the *Portland Neighborhood Survey* (2001).

*“The EJ Small Grants program provided support for EJAG during our formative years. The program’s support helped us build a core of members who now ensure that Portland’s environmental policies meet the needs of EJ communities. We are grateful for the financial assistance, but the support and knowledge we gain from the department’s staff is invaluable.”*

*Kevia Jeffrey, EJAG Board Member.*

## Empowering an EJ Community in Seattle - South Park

South Park is one of Seattle’s most ethnically diverse communities. In addition, South Park and the surrounding Georgetown area have the highest concentration of toxic waste sites in Washington State. Through a previously conducted door-to-door survey, two things emerged: 1) identification of the environmental and health issues that the community wanted to address, and 2) confirmation that the information the community received about environmental issues in their neighborhood was inadequate to the degree that the community was unlikely to be part of the decisionmaking process. In response to this, the purpose of the grant was twofold: to increase public access to and retrieval of environmental and public health information about their community; and to build community capacity to identify local EJ problems and develop solutions.



*Participants in the Maniilaq Association Workshop, Kotzebue, Alaska*



# Equal Employment Opportunity

*The EEO program ensures that there is fair and equitable treatment of all employees in every aspect of their employment, and that they understand their EEO rights and responsibilities.*

## The Focus

The EEO program focuses in three major areas:

**Prevention** – take actions to prevent discriminatory action from taking place

**Timely solution** – if a discriminatory action is reported, provide a process that leads to a timely solution

**Accountability** – assure that all managers are participating in and responsible for EEO activities.

## What is the Region doing?

Our goal is accomplished by providing information through e-mail, EEO reference guide and through semi-annual training programs. In addition, information is provided by EEO counselors -- employees who serve on a collateral-duty basis to assist and advise employees and supervisors with EEO-related concerns when they arise.

The EEO program also includes the Affirmative Employment Program. Its focus is on recruiting, hiring and retaining a diverse workforce that represents all segments of our population.

Employee Resource Programs, also included in the EEO Program, are intended to address the concerns of those groups that have been under-represented in the workplace; i.e., women, minorities, people of color, gays/lesbians/bisexuals, and persons with disabilities.

## Getting Results

The OCREJ has taken a proactive approach to ensure that staff and management are engaged in moving EPA towards improved understanding of EEO issues, prevention of discrimination, and accountability for implementing EEO.

The number of employees seeking EEO consultation services from OCREJ has risen 500% since 1998. The increasing value, utilization, and request for EEO consultations can be attributed to the establishment of the OCREJ and to a workforce which has received EEO training:

1. Training for staff and management on EEO; roles, responsibilities, and employees' rights related to the EEO Complaint process.
2. Training for EEO counselors to improve their EEO knowledge base and improve their ability to come to timely, mutually acceptable solutions.

***"I am reaffirming my commitment to Region 10's Civil Rights (CR) and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) programs and expectations of having a workplace free of EEO discrimination. We must all create and maintain a work environment that ensures equal opportunity for all current employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, sex, age, religion, color, national origin, or disability. Furthermore, discrimination or harassment based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability or sexual orientation is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in Region 10."***

***-- Chuck Findley, Acting RA,  
R10 EEO Policy, March 12, 2001***

## Region 10 Announces its Proactive Commitment to EEO

OCREJ and the Regional Administrator issued a new EEO policy statement which re-emphasized R10's commitment to civil rights, EEO, management's role in preventing and addressing EEO complaints, and fairness and equity in the workplace.

### Increased Accountability for Managers:

Completed an EEO evaluation measure ("Critical Element and Standard") which was included in FY2001 performance agreements of supervisors and managers. The expected result is to improve accountability related to civil rights and EEO.

### Broadened the Base of Support for the Employee Resource Programs:

To increase the visibility, credibility, and utilization of the Employee Resource Programs, OCREJ engaged the Executive Team and increased the number of Executive Sponsors from 1 to 4.

### Sustained R10's Commitment to the Use of the Upward Mobility Program for Career Advancement:

OCREJ was successful in continuing the use of the Upward Mobility recycled FTE. This position allows a new employee to be trained by an employee who is planning on retiring soon. The Upward Mobility Program accomplishes two things:

1. Provides the opportunity for development, training, and advancement to employees who qualify and
2. Captures some of the broad institutional knowledge gathered by long term employees over the years.



# Small & Disadvantaged Business Utilization

*The Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization program ensures that recipients of EPA financial assistance award a fair share of contracts/procurements to small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses.*

## Mandate

It is EPA policy that recipients of EPA financial assistance through grants, cooperative agreements and loans, award a fair share of contracts and procurements to small, disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses. This policy applies to all contracts or procurements for supplies, construction, equipment and services under any EPA grant or cooperative agreement. It also applies to any Interagency Agreement where supplies, construction, equipment and services are being purchased. The program is based on the following principles:

1. A healthy, growing economy is fundamental to creating the opportunity for formation and growth of small and disadvantaged businesses.
2. Greater economic independence for minority Americans will best be achieved through increased opportunities for private employment and business ownership.
3. Creativity, private entrepreneurship, and individual initiative will ultimately determine the success or failure of individual minority businesses.
4. Expanded involvement of the private sector is crucial to minority enterprise developmental efforts.

## Successes

Members of OCREJ routinely attend business fairs to provide vendors with information on:

- How to do business with EPA.
- Business Opportunities with EPA.
- Business Opportunities with those that receive financial assistance from EPA.
- Networking with other small and disadvantaged businesses to work in a collaborative fashion to secure more numerous and larger contracts from those that receive financial assistance from EPA.
- In addition, the business fairs provide EPA and opportunity to:
  - *Learn about new emerging businesses.*
  - *Learn about other Federal, state and local small and disadvantage business programs.*
  - *Network with disadvantaged business enterprises and other Federal, state and local agencies.*

## Working Partnerships

OCREJ and the Region 10 Tribal Office have been instrumental in assuring that Tribal concerns are adequately addressed in the new Disadvantaged Business Enterprise rules that are being developed. Tribes have been briefed on the proposed new rule and its implications on Tribes and their operations. As a result of the Region 10 activities, the rule is being redrafted to accommodate Tribal concerns.

OCREJ has provided training to Oregon state agencies working on assistance agreements involving the State Revolving Fund. The session provided background on the Minority and Women Business Enterprise program, reporting requirements, and a briefing on the proposed new Disadvantaged Business Enterprise rule.

When asked if the session was successful in accomplishing the goals, the participants' response showed that 100% were extremely or very satisfied.

## Looking Forward

Below are a few of the Office for Civil Rights and Environmental Justice priorities for the coming year.

- Work with the Office of Ecosystems and Communities and other program offices to review environmental impact statements for Environmental Justice components and analysis.
- Continue actions to assure that tribal concerns are addressed in the new Disadvantaged Business Enterprise rule.
- Implement training programs (e.g., EEO complaint process and Diversity) and accountability mechanisms (e.g., performance agreements) to help assure prevention of and/or timely resolution of EEO complaints.
- Complete the Diversity Assessment Project.
- Develop a protocol which incorporates Environmental Justice into programmatic work.

